



June 15, 2020

Senator Lindsey Graham, Chair  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Dianne Feinstein, Ranking Member  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Support for S.948 (Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act) and S.3599 (Healthcare Workforce Resiliency Act)

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Feinstein:

The National Kidney Foundation (NKF) expresses our support for both the Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act (S. 948) and the Healthcare Workforce Resiliency Act (S. 3599) and urge you to work toward the prompt enactment of these important, bipartisan pieces of legislation.

In this era of physician shortages, many of America's 37 million adults impacted by kidney disease rely on the specialized care of international medical graduates. According to the American Society of Nephrology, international medical graduates make up a majority of the practicing nephrologists in America and are more likely to work in traditionally underserved and rural areas.

Both S. 948 and S.3599 would increase the availability of international medical graduates to address the ongoing physician shortage that has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. *The Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act* would reauthorize an important program which allows doctors on J-1 visas, who under current law must leave the country for two years after the end of their residency, to remain in the United States without having to return home if they agree to practice in an underserved area for three years. It would also establish new employment protections and a streamlined pathway to a green card for participants. It includes provisions to allow the program to expand beyond 30 slots if certain nationwide thresholds are met, creating three new slots per state to be used by academic medical centers.
2. *The Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act* would allow the recapture of 15,000 unused employment-based physician immigrant visas from prior fiscal years, and these unused visas could go to International Medical Graduates (IMG) who are critically needed in our response to COVID-19. The bill recognizes the urgency of the public health emergency by requiring the Department of Homeland Security and State Department to expedite the processing of recaptured visas, ensuring that clinicians will begin helping patients as soon as possible.

The National Kidney Foundation is the leading organization in the U.S. dedicated to the awareness, prevention, and treatment of kidney disease for hundreds of thousands of healthcare professionals, millions of patients and their families, and tens of millions of Americans at risk. We support these bills to increase access to specialized nephrology care to our patients, especially those in underserved and rural areas. As leaders of the Judiciary Committee, we ask you to move these bills through the legislative process and work to ensure that kidney patients have access to the care that they need.

If you have any questions on this or other NKF legislative priorities, please reach out to Lauren Drew ([Lauren.Drew@kidney.org](mailto:Lauren.Drew@kidney.org)).

Sincerely,

Kevin Longino  
CEO and transplant patient

Holly Kramer, MD, MPH  
President